



Insight Studios is our student-run business started to provide students with the opportunity to learn a skill in a safe and supportive work environment.

**INSIGHT STUDIOS**  
Northshore Recovery High School  
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The Friends of NEC offers online giving as a donation option. Please visit [www.nsedu.org](http://www.nsedu.org). If you would like to learn more about giving opportunities, please call: The Development Office at 978.232.9755 ext. 1251

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Colleen Dolan  
Executive Director  
Sarah Seiler  
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**Grants Announced**

It is with gratitude that The Friends of NEC announce the following grants:

- The McCarthy Family Foundation awarded a \$2,000 grant to help meet the technology match requirement by the John Alden Trust. A total of \$22,000 was raised to purchase SMARTBoards for the North Shore Academy Upper and Lower schools.
- Several generous grants have provided funds for classroom technology helping students with special needs access their curriculum.
- The Charlotte Frey Foundation donated \$20,000 for improved technology at the Kevin O'Grady School. This grant has resulted in the purchase of iPads and adaptive equipment for 12 classrooms that serve multiply handicapped, medically fragile students. Charlotte was a beautiful little girl and was to become a student at the Kevin O'Grady School last fall. She passed away last summer at age three and in her memory, the Charlotte Frey Foundation was established and in her name, the technology improvements have come to KOGS and the swing set in our new PlaySpace was built.

*Article by Deborah Gardner Walker, Grants Manager*

**Pinwheels for Peace**



*The Kevin O'Grady School participated in Pin Wheels for Peace on International Peace Day, September 21st. This year over 65 students decorated Pin Wheels with illustrations and messages of peace which were placed in front of the Sohier Road building for all to enjoy.*

# The News

**Recovery High part of "Express Yourself"**

The walls were rockin' on May 19th at the Citi Performing Arts Center Wang Theater as over 2,000 people gathered to watch underserved youth from various communities and residential facilities sing, dance, drum, laugh and EXPRESS themselves! The opening piece had everyone on their feet, hands in the air and wearing neon glow necklaces! The evening was a fantastic blur of energy, confidence and overwhelming pride!

This nationally acclaimed Department of Mental Health sponsored event happens every year and involves over 25 nonprofit organizations and their youth. Our own Recovery High School students along with Devin (RHS staff, Insight Studios Director & cherished mentor) have had the privilege of performing with Express Yourself over the last several years and working with

London STOMP Director, Lorraine LeBlanc. This year for the Here & Now performance, Ms. LeBlanc choreographed a drum piece for the students played on cajons. The excitement of being part of something so powerful, so well received and so fun has impacted Recovery High students year after year. This event is something that is looked forward to, prepared for and performed with dignity and unbelievable joy! It is a definite "must see" so be on the lookout for next year's performance and get ready for a night of expression and total satisfaction!

As one student said before this past year's performance, "What you are going to see tonight is a bunch of kids who have come from difficult backgrounds but who are going to showcase so many talents and they are about to express themselves to you in an artistic way that you won't forget."



*Lorraine LeBlanc of STOMP and RHS students perform.*

**NSA Upper School Develops a Green Thumb!**

Clad in gardening gloves and holding clumps of yellow, orange and pink stemmed Swiss chard, students chase a mouse which has chewed through the roots of the plants they put in as seeds last spring. The mouse, obviously petrified of two charging adolescents, quickly hops the wall of our raised bed and scurries away through the grass. Mission accomplished, the students race off for math class.

The horticulture program at Northshore Academy started in the spring of 2010 with the construction of two raised beds to support hands-on learning in environmental science. We visited several local farms and began to cultivate our own tomatoes, zucchini, cucumbers, peas, beans, kale, spinach, beets, radishes, carrots, broccoli, Swiss chard, lettuce, arugula, onions, garlic, pumpkins, broccoli and a wide variety of herbs and edible flowers. Last year, the

program expanded to include spring and fall gardening electives. We also built two additional raised beds and grew lights to start plants indoors.

This fall, thanks to a partnership with Chapman's greenhouse in Beverly Farms, we will be able to start a year round horticulture program. We will start by planting a variety of winter squash and building seasonal protectors to extend our outdoor growing season. Then as the winter comes on we will be able to hold weekly classes at Chapman's and utilize their greenhouse to force bulbs, grow houseplants, learn about tropical plants and start our spring garden seedlings. This year we are also working to expand our composting efforts to include kitchen scraps from the Culinary Program in addition to garden debris. We also look forward to doing more volunteer work at the Food Project and gaining experience in



*A very proud Andrew Ouellette*

ornamental horticulture at Long Hill Estate.

The three overarching goals of the horticulture program are to provide vocational, academic and therapeutic opportunities for our students. Students are also exposed to healthy food and nutrition information as well as mild exercise. Studies have shown that time spent outdoors and in view of green spaces improves mental health and learning outcomes. *Continued on next page*

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So here we are in the full swing of another academic year! With so many wonderful things happening at NEC, please allow me the opportunity to share a few of them with you!

In September 2010, a student was enrolled at the Northshore Academy Lower School who was unable to speak diagnosed with a complex condition called selective mutism. Months went by before this student uttered a word but by June of 2011 this same student took part in the end of the year celebration as a member of the school chorus!

There is a young man who works in the Business Office at NEC three days per week. His responsibilities include a variety of jobs including filing, stocking shelves, and taking mail to the post office. While navigating processing challenges probably foreign to you and I, he is incredibly reliable and helpful, friendly, and by the way, an avid Boston sports fan! He often travels independently on public transportation to attend professional sports games in Boston and best of all, he is a graduate of our Embark program!

The Northshore Academy Upper School holds a talent show each year in June. Several students took the stage to sing, dance or read poetry they had written. Now, a high school talent show may sound relatively unremarkable, but when you consider what these students have to overcome in order to perform, standing up in front of a packed audience is indeed remarkable!

At Kevin O'Grady School a student who has been unable to communicate verbally was provided with a new communication device. With hours of training and experimentation, this incredible young person is now communicating his thoughts and feelings and we have found him to have a sense of humor that has had us all rolling with laughter!

Northshore Recovery High School was recently featured in a documentary on Current TV. The documentary followed three students in their struggles with substance abuse and raised awareness about this issue. The film highlights the tremendous care and support students receive at NSRHS and the resulting success of the students.

These are just a few examples of the success stories that I am privileged to witness on a daily basis. Thank you NEC staff, parents, and community for supporting our work on behalf of our very unique body of students.

**Colleen Dolan, Executive Director**

*Photo by Deborah Gardner Walker*

## Are you up for a CHALLENGE MATCH?



Thanks to the incredible generosity of two very special friends to the Northshore Education Consortium, starting this fall a very unique opportunity is being offered to all Consortium donors, both new and long time supporters. These two donors have pledged to match every new and increased gift made to the Consortium on a one to one basis up to \$10,000. This match will run for eight months, November 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012.

This means that all donors have the potential of increasing the value of their gift to the Consortium. Every dollar received from new donors and every dollar increase made by previous donors over their last year's annual appeal gift, will be matched through this challenge. Further, if you have given in past years but were unable to give last year, any amount you contribute to this appeal will be considered new money and matched dollar for dollar.

Through this incredible opportunity you have a chance to significantly impact the life of each child we are trusted to serve. Stay tuned as this special invitation will be mailed out during the first few weeks of November!

*Continued from page 1 - NSA Upper School Develops a Green Thumb!*

Our first fundraiser was to join the Beverly Farmers market on Monday Sept 12th. We sold pumpkins, tomatoes and Swiss chard as well as a variety of herbs, and potted plants. We were able to raise a small amount of money and share information about the program with the community. We anticipate having several plant sales throughout the year including a holiday sale in December to raise money for the program. We always welcome donations of plants, seed, old tools and pots. Our greatest wish is to win a grant for a greenhouse of our own at NSA. For more information please contact Caitlin Gilson, Science Teacher and Coordinator of the Horticulture Program at [cgilson@nsedu.org](mailto:cgilson@nsedu.org).

*- Article by Caitlyn Gilson*

## Walk & Roll raises \$9,000 for PlaySpace2

Thank you to everyone who came out to on a beautiful Saturday in early June for the 2nd annual Walk & Roll. What a great time we had! Thank you to everyone who walked and rolled -- on skates, bicycles, wheelchairs or strollers -- to kick off phase two of the Kevin O'Grady School's outdoor play improvement campaign. We brought in \$9,000 through this fun family event. Thank you to our generous donors and volunteers who made this a successful event. The staff, board and children appreciate your efforts. It takes a community to build a PlaySpace and we did it. Beginning in October 2011, the Walk & Roll became an annual fall event with a harvest/Halloween theme. Thank you to those who joined us on the weekend of October 29th for face painting, pumpkin decorating, raffles and of course, time to walk and roll!

*Photos by Deborah Gardner Walker*



*Friends and family walking and rolling on June 4th.*

## Personal Learning Plan: the New GPS of Learning

In the continuing effort to facilitate ownership and personal responsibility for a student's own learning, the Northshore Academy Lower School has started a new initiative for the 2011-2012 academic year called the Personal Learning Plan (PLP). This strategy is designed to foster a student's (referred to as "learner" throughout article) personal growth and development of good character, as well as their ability to be forward thinking in planning their schoolwork and academic career. Each individualized PLP outlines specific goals in the form of Essential Questions for the learner to apply throughout the year. While these goals may not always be directly academic or connected to the Individualized Education Plan, they are designed to develop the learner's habits in areas of attentiveness, organizational skills, inquiry, critical thinking, reflective learning, communication, and revision.

The PLP is part of another new initiative, called Advisory, which focuses on strengthening teacher-learner

communication and learner engagement with their education. Teachers meet with each learner once a week during a designated Advisory time in order to develop and refine his/her individualized PLP. Each learner creates an inventory list of their specific goals stating the "what" of achieving those goals, and then they will draw out a roadmap of "how" they will accomplish those goals. The roadmap is like a GPS for developing positive learning habits. Learners make regular journal entries that reflect upon the process, successes, and struggles of their PLP journey, as well as complete a self assessment rubric every trimester. The weekly Advisory time will also be used for continual teacher-learner check-ins throughout the year.

Lastly, the PLP is part of yet another new initiative at the Northshore Academy Lower School: the Portfolio. Each student will have a Portfolio that documents his/her achievements in eight standards of excellence. The PLP part of the portfolio will contain each leg of the learner's journey towards their academic engagement and success.

*Article by Christina Chamberlain*

## NEC Bucks the "Outsourcing Trend" for Custodial Services

In a bold move to further improve the quality of work life for both staff and students at Kevin O'Grady School and Northshore Academy Lower School, Executive Director, Colleen Dolan brought the custodial services "in house". Beginning last winter, Colleen, Elaine McCormack (Chief Financial Officer) and Norman Roberts (Facilities Director) worked closely together to develop a plan designed to increase the quality of building cleanliness.

As with all successful professional endeavors, the most important piece is the people. Two Site Coordinators and related staff needed to be hired. Based on their trustworthiness and vested interest in NEC, Norman and the Screening Committee hired Gary Cook and Jim Robertie as the Site Coordinators at KOGS (Kevin O'Grady School) and NSAL (Northshore Academy Lower School) respectively and they came to their new positions from the NEC transportation department. Both have been involved with NEC staff and students while functioning as school bus drivers and as such bring an awareness of their physical surroundings and a level of caring to their

day to day responsibilities that has made the first three months of our "in house" custodial services a tremendous success. Jim is an EMT during the day and the Site Coordinator at NSAL at night. Gary continues to do school bus field trips for NEC before reporting to KOGS at noon every day to begin his Site Coordinator duties. Supporting Jim is Matt Marcotte, a college student who has monitored on NEC vans and buses for both KOGS and NSAL before accepting a custodial/maintenance position at NSAL. Gary has three helping hands at KOGS. Butch Bernard has over 25 years' experience in the building maintenance field and most recently operated a 7D van for our students at KOGS and Recovery High School. Ruth Cook who by day is a para professional at KOGS and by night helps to make everyone's environment cleaner and brighter at KOGS. Gary's team is rounded out by Shaun Cronin. Shaun is a college student who came over from our transportation department to contribute in a big way to the success of this program.

We thank Gary, Butch, Ruth and Shaun for their hard work and dedication at KOGS.

## Embark's Community Outreach

The Embark Program has formed a fantastic partnership with the Brook House for Women in historic Salem. The Brook House for Women is a rest home for 36 women located across the street from the Friendship schooner. Students from Embark have the opportunity to be trained in a variety of areas such as laundry, grounds keeping, housekeeping, food service and clerical. Students also have the opportunity to develop general work behaviors such as endurance, stamina, work ethic, getting along with co-workers, etc. Four students piloted this partnership in July and the feedback from Brook House and Embark staff was overwhelmingly positive. In going forward, students who meet the expectations of the Brook House will be considered for paid training positions this upcoming January. The goal for our students is to have them placed in community jobs by June 2012.

*Article by Patrice Grande, Embark Director*



*April folding laundry*

And we thank Jim and Matt for that same work ethic and dedication at NSAL. These six individuals have made the Consortium environment cleaner and safer for everyone. Should you see any of these individuals in our hallways give them a much deserved "thumbs up" and a "well done"! We wish them continued success with this program and will continue to support their endeavors in any way possible.

*Article by Norman Roberts, Facilities Director*

## 2010-2011 Honor Roll of Donors

### TRIBUTE & MEMORIAL GIFTS

Throughout the course of the fiscal year 2010-2011, the Friends of the Northshore Education Consortium (Friends) has been the grateful recipient of tribute and memorial gifts, which pay homage to loved ones and friends, while enhancing the quality of life offered to our students. The Friends would further like to honor these individuals in this special Tribute section:

Norman & Madeline Watt *in honor of Alexa C. Watt.*  
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 Deborah Risotti *in memory of Sarah Marie Risotti.*

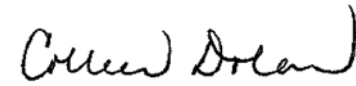
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## 2010-2011 Honor Roll of Donors

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, the Friends of NEC, staff and teachers, and the entire Consortium community, I want to thank you all for your generosity during the past year. The support of our donors helps to fund and support all of our offerings that make the Consortium the best provider of special needs services and programs on the North Shore. From our annual Celebrate Our Future to our successful Walk and Roll Event, I thank you for your support.

  
 Colleen Dolan, Executive Director



\*Please note that while each giving level is named after a Consortium program, giving at any level goes to benefit all students of the Consortium.

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## Annual Donor Recognition Event Coupled With Joyous Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

What a picture perfect day September 28th was here at the Kevin O'Grady School! A decision to couple a ribbon cutting ceremony for our long awaited PlaySpace with our annual Donor Recognition event proved to be a tremendous success! The Donor Recognition event is held every fall as a gesture of gratitude for our donors contributing at our Gift Club Recovery Level or higher. With the sun out, a light breeze, and children moving about the PlaySpace, everyone seemed all smiles. To top it off, the luncheon catered by the amazing Northshore Academy Upper School Culinary Program was delicious! Chef Paul, you and your students provided a very high end and scrumptious lunch! Thank you!

Giving may come natural to most of us, but choosing to give to NEC sends the clear message to our students, their parents and staff and to our communities that every individual who walks through our doors is significant, cherished and prioritized by YOU!



Photo by Deborah Gardner Walker:  
Executive Director, Colleen Dolan photographed with Kevin Noyes, VP,  
Danversbank Charitable Foundation (\$50,000 pledge) and Deanne  
Cefalo, Program Director, Kevin O'Grady School

### Other Giving Opportunities:

#### Online Giving

A convenient method for giving, the Friends of NEC now offers an online giving option through two secure donation pages on our website. Contributions of any denomination are accepted using this donation form and will go to benefit the greatest need within our organization. Every dollar donated will go to supporting and continuing the services and programs that The Consortium provides to our students, families, and communities.

#### Bequests

A simple yet powerful way to remember the Consortium is to include a gift to NEC through a will. A bequest of any size is welcome and can be made out to: Friends of Northshore Education Consortium. Giving through a will is another way to ensure the continuing support of our mission.

Thank you to all of our donors. Your generosity allows the Consortium to continue to make a positive difference in the lives of students and families on the North Shore.

If you would like to inquire as to how you might best support the students of the Consortium, please contact our development office at 978-232-977 ext. 1251. Information is also available online at [www.nsedu.org](http://www.nsedu.org).

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this publication and we sincerely regret any errors or omissions. If any error has been made, please contact our Development Office at 978.232.9755 ext. 1251, or at [swadhams-seiler@nsedu.org](mailto:swadhams-seiler@nsedu.org)



The Friends of NEC worked with the Consortium to fundraise over \$220,000 last fiscal year through focused efforts in grant writing, event planning, pledges and direct mail appeal. Some of the wonderful opportunities our students were afforded include: music therapy lessons at Embark, improved technology in all of our programs and administrative offices, and the completion of PlaySpace 1 which was built on May 19th through a Community Build!